

The rates for prison phone calls do not appear to be designed to encourage communication. Prisoners rely on family and friends to support them because they can rarely support themselves. Most prisons are located far from major population centers, difficult to reach, expensive to travel to, expensive to call. The majority of prisoners come from low income families who can ill-afford the costs to maintain regular contact. Yet, maintaining contact promotes a prisoner's return from incarceration and strong relationships work against re-incarceration. If society truly wants to discourage negative behavior, why undermine positive relationships?

Prisons have been known to use contact to punish inmates: arbitrarily ending calls, poor reception on phone lines, and ending calls mid-sentence for non-existent infractions are a few of their tactics. As long as prisoners, and their relationships, are regarded as undeserving, these offenses will continue. Without oversight, this unprotected population will continue to be exploited.

